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GOV. MARK WARNER ANNOUNCES NEW SYSTEM TO GUARANTEE NO WRONG DOOR FOR THOSE IN NEED OF COMMUNITY-BASED LONG-TERM SERVICES

RICHMOND – 12-1-05 – In a move that will vastly improve the delivery of services to Virginia seniors and adults with disabilities, Gov. Mark R. Warner today announced the launch of the Community-based Coordinated Services System.

This system combines Web-based technology and in-depth databases of both client and service provider information to quickly connect consumers with the best match among local services. The secure, HIPAA-compliant system will enable service providers to work together to make information and referral, case management and reporting faster, more accurate and better for clients.

The benefits of shared client databases are well documented, and there are a number of initiatives underway across the country. The Commonwealth, however, is taking a unique approach. “Instead of trying to impose a government-driven solution, Virginia has built upon its long tradition of successful public/private partnerships,” said Gov. Warner. “Under the Community-based Coordinated Services System, an adult day care facility in Lexington is as much a part of the solution as the Virginia Department of Aging. A corporation providing private support, like Dominion, is as significant a partner as a local United Way or the federal government. We’re all on the same page, with the same goals.”

The Dominion Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Dominion, provided \$100,000 in start-up funds for the Community-based Coordinated Services System.

“Recognizing the critical needs of all members of a society is the true measure of a community,” said Dominion Foundation President William C. Hall, Jr. “Cooperation among government, nonprofit organizations and businesses to meet these needs at the local level creates a positive force that strengthens our communities and improves conditions for all Virginians,” said Hall.

The Dominion funding paved the way for a federal grant of more than \$750,000 from the U.S. Administration on Aging and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Considerable support also was provided by local governments and non-profits.

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The goal in developing this new system was to make No Wrong Door a reality for those seeking long-term care services. “This allows consumers to have a virtual single point of entry into all of the Commonwealth’s community-based long-term care services,” said Virginia Secretary of Health and Human Resources Jane Woods. “Its comprehensive database of public and private referral programs and powerful Web-based information system offer many ‘right doors’ to citizens in need of long-term support, eliminating the confusion and frustration of not knowing where to turn.”

Virginia has been preparing the groundwork necessary to implement this system for the past several years. Particularly important was the development of the Universal Assessment Instrument, which established a common language among agencies serving seniors and adults with disabilities. This tool allows all those providing services to collect and share information about clients’ needs quickly and efficiently with very strict privacy protection.

“This system will not only be a great solution for our citizens, it is also smart business,” said Del. Phil Hamilton, who chairs both the House Health, Welfare and Institutions Committee, and the Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Resources. “It will help our state to stretch limited resources to better serve a growing population.”

The Virginia Department on Aging is assisting in project administration of the Community-based Coordinated Services System, providing support to Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) who have taken the lead in each pilot region. Senior Connections, the Capital Area Agency on Aging will lead the pilot for Greater Richmond, the Peninsula Agency on Aging will guide the Peninsula Pilot, and Valley Program for Aging Services will take the lead in the Shenandoah Valley.

“Service providers in the Richmond area have shared a vision for a system like this for years,” said Thelma Bland Watson, Ph.D., executive director of Senior Connections, the Capital Area Agency on Aging. “We convened a task force to study the opportunities and barriers of coordinated care and have researched the technology options to implement such a system. We are excited about being a part of this pilot because it will allow Senior Connections to expand our tradition of excellence in coordinating services for seniors and build on the strong network of partners in the Greater Richmond area. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to help seniors and caregivers have easier access to the services they need.”

Instrumental to the development and operation of the Community-based Coordinated Services System is SeniorNavigator, a public/private partnership that has grown over the past five years to become the number one resource in Virginia for health and aging information.

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“Ultimately, the goal is to empower consumers to access services and make informed choices,” said Katie Roeper, SeniorNavigator executive director. “We’ve built on our history of combining community with technology to create an expanded system which not only links individuals with community services but enables service providers to share information to better serve common clients.”

The Community-based Coordinated Services System is a collaborative public/private partnership between the Commonwealth of Virginia and its agencies, SeniorNavigator, Peninsula Agency on Aging, Senior Connections, the Capital Area Agency on Aging, Valley Program for Aging Services, Inc., the Commonwealth Council on Aging, the Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging, 2-1-1 Virginia, local governments and more than 100 local private service providers across Virginia.

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